

**Submission  
No 98**

## **INQUIRY INTO THE BUILDING THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION PROGRAM**

**Organisation:** Matong Public School P&C  
**Name:** Mr David Currie  
**Position:** President  
**Date received:** 7/06/2010

---

# Matong Public School P & C

The Director  
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St  
Sydney NSW 2000

2<sup>nd</sup> June 2010

## **RE: Building the Education Revolution Initiative**

Dear Director,

Whilst we are very grateful for the money received from the Federal Government to refurbish our school buildings and erect our Covered Outdoor Learning Area (COLA), it would be remiss of us not to write to you and express our extreme disappointment at what we believe to be the poor use of resources and the lack of value for dollar for the projects carried out at our school, especially the COLA.

After substantial consultation with the school community, we submitted a list of seven projects in order of importance but, when the funding was announced, we were told that only two could be done – classroom refurbishment (which was low on our list of priorities) and the erection of a COLA (which was listed last). Despite a good deal of discussion and negotiation between the school, project manager (Laing-O'Rourke) and other relevant authorities, aimed at maximising value for dollar, we have finished up with a structure that is approximately 14m by 12m. As grand as the COLA is, it covers less than half the basketball court that our original submission had requested and, unfortunately, at this time of year, does not provide shade over the intended area. This was evident at our recent school ANZAC service when, at 10.30 a.m. on a very warm day, most visitors had to sit under shade provided by other buildings because the concrete basketball court was in full sun.

We are still awaiting a final breakdown of costs for this project but we are very strong in our opinion that, despite the extravagance of the specifications for the COLA, there is no way that a total figure of \$200 000 can be claimed or justified. When one considers that the "rule of thumb" for costing a new house in our area is around \$1 000 per square metre – which includes paint, floor coverings, fittings etc – the COLAs price tag of almost \$1 200 per square metre for a roof and six posts is ludicrous.

Since the construction of the COLA, P & C have had to fundraise \$3000 to purchase a storage area that was desperately needed for sports equipment. A cost we believe the P & C should not have to incur if the BER money had been spent wisely. Fundraising in a small school community is no easy task considering our current climate.

As a community, we are disappointed with what we have received for the alleged \$200 000 provided for our COLA and as a committee we felt these views had to be brought to your attention.

Yours Faithfully,

David Currie  
President

Jennifer Hatty  
Secretary